International Weather and Crop Summary

October 16 - 22, 2005

International Weather and Crop Highlights and Summaries provided by USDA/WAOB

HIGHLIGHTS

EUROPE: Showers alleviated drought on the Iberian Peninsula, while dry weather across eastern Europe facilitated fieldwork but decreased topsoil moisture for winter grain planting.

FSU-WESTERN: In Ukraine and Russia, light to moderate showers continued to provide much-needed topsoil moisture for winter wheat emergence and establishment, but interrupted summer crop harvesting.

MIDDLE EAST: Cool, wet weather in Turkey boosted moisture supplies for winter grain planting and germination.

SOUTH ASIA: Dry weather in northern India favored summer crop maturation and early harvesting, while heavy rain in Bangladesh and northeastern India caused flooding and harvest delays.

NORTHWESTERN AFRICA: A third week of showery weather signaled a favorable start to the rainy season.

SOUTH AFRICA: Beneficial rain covered southern and eastern sections of the corn belt, improving local planting prospects.

AUSTRALIA: Widespread rain favored filling winter grains in western and southeastern Australia, but slowed winter grain maturation and harvesting in northern New South Wales and Queensland.

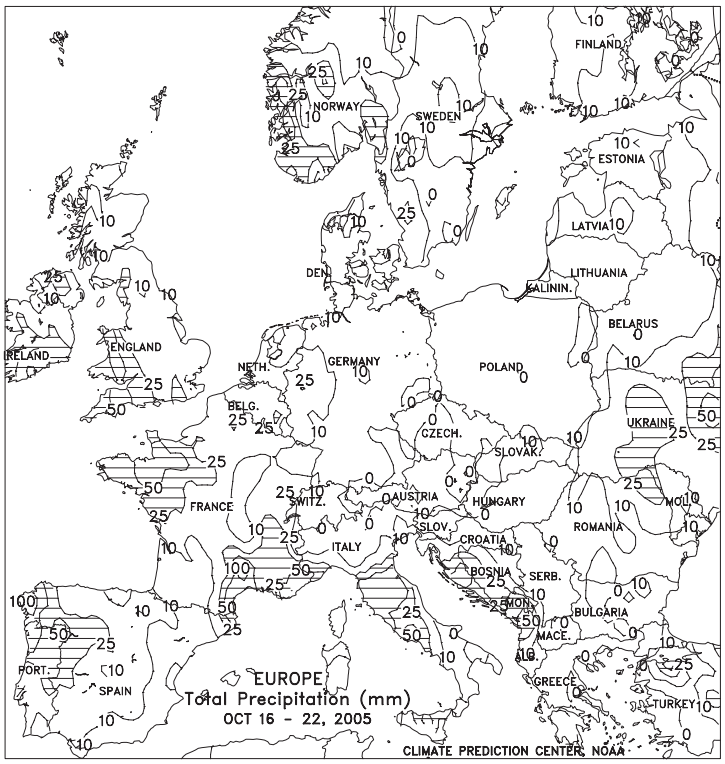
EASTERN ASIA: Mostly dry, seasonably warm weather promoted autumn fieldwork, including winter wheat planting on the North China Plain.

SOUTHEAST ASIA: Dry weather in northern Thailand and the Philippines aided rice harvesting, while flooding continued in coffee areas of central Vietnam.

MEXICO: Hurricane Wilma hammered the Yucatan Peninsula, but dry weather dominated major southern crop areas.

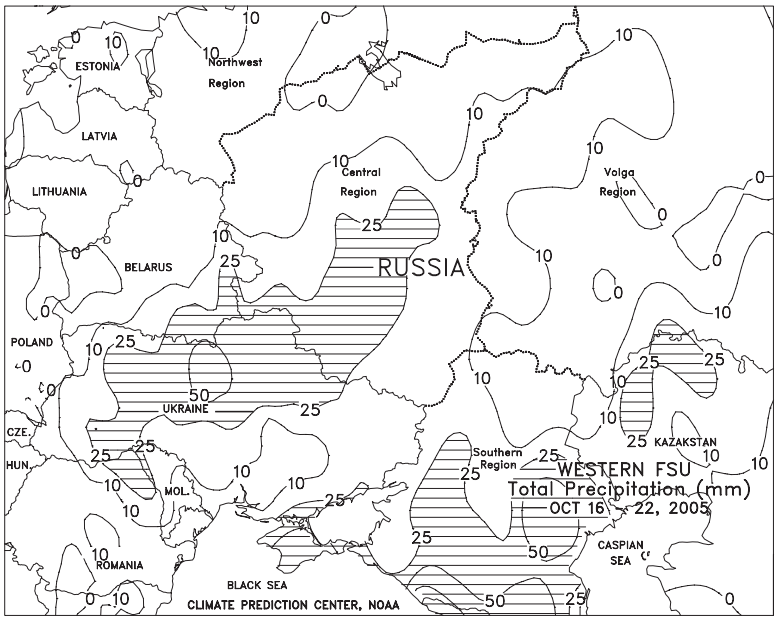
BRAZIL: Locally heavy showers persisted in the south, worsening winter wheat harvest prospects.

ARGENTINA: Warmth and dryness stressed immature winter wheat in parts of Cordoba and Santa Fe.



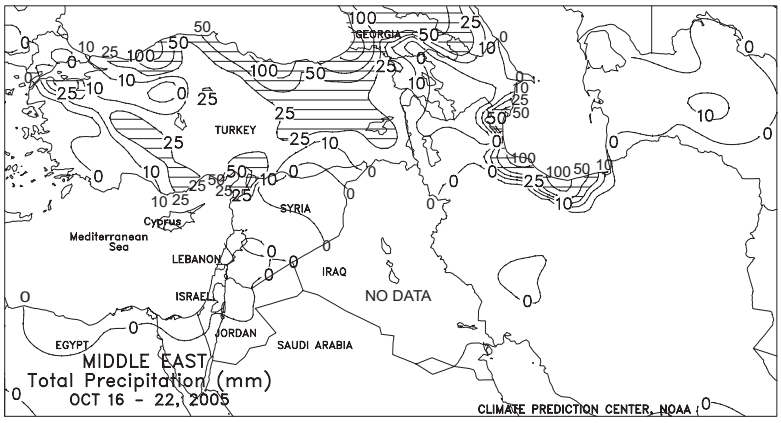
EUROPE

Widespread showers in western growing areas contrasted with persistent dryness across northeastern Europe. A large area of high pressure maintained dry weather across Poland and eastern Germany, promoting summer crop harvesting and winter grain planting. In Poland, however, a 2-month dry spell has depleted topsoil moisture for winter grain planting and establishment. Farther west, a slow-moving cold front brought beneficial, locally heavy showers (5-55 mm) to the Iberian Peninsula, alleviating long-term dryness and providing moisture for winter grain planting. Widespread rain (10-50 mm) in France, England, and the Benelux countries eased short-term dryness and increased topsoil moisture for winter grain planting and germination. Meanwhile, mostly dry weather across the Balkans facilitated fieldwork following several months of above-normal rainfall.



FSU-WESTERN

An early-week storm spread light to moderate showers across most of Ukraine and Russia, providing much-needed topsoil moisture for winter grain establishment but causing some interruptions in summer crop harvesting. Greatest amounts of precipitation (25-50 mm or more) fell in northern Ukraine and parts of Russia (southern portion of the Central Region and the central portion of the Southern Region). Reports from Ukraine as of October 24 indicated that corn and sunflowers were 62 and 96 percent harvested, respectively. Reports from Russia indicated corn, sunflower, and sugar beet were 62, 89, and 91 percent harvested, respectively. The rain was followed by sharply cooler weather that overspread the region during the latter half of the week. Sub-freezing temperatures (-6 to -1 degrees C) were widespread at week's end, ending the 2005 growing season in many areas. Although rain improved emergence prospects for winter wheat in major producing areas in Ukraine and the Southern Region in Russia, unseasonably mild weather is needed to ensure that crops become sufficiently established before entering dormancy. Typically winter wheat in these areas enters dormancy by mid-November. Weekly temperatures averaged near to slightly above normal in northern Russia (Central and Volga Regions), near to slightly below normal in the Southern Region in Russia, and 1 to 3 degrees C below normal in Ukraine. Winter grains in northern Russia continued to cold-harden prior to entering dormancy, usually in late October.

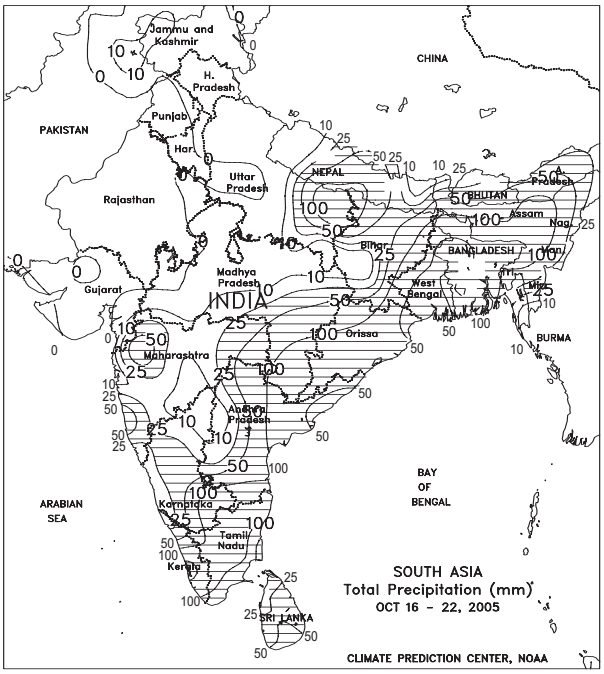


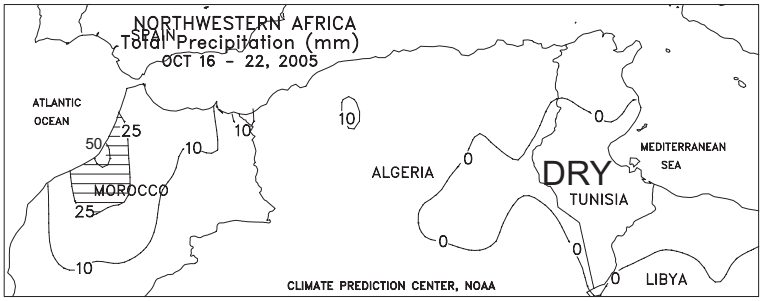
MIDDLE EAST

Cool, wet weather in western growing areas contrasted with dry, warm conditions in the east. A slow-moving disturbance triggered widespread showers (15-50 mm) across much of central and eastern Turkey, providing favorable conditions for winter grain germination and establishment. Locally heavy rain (100-200 mm) along Turkey's north coast maintained adequate to abundant moisture supplies for winter grains but caused flooding. However, dry weather in western Turkey favored cotton harvesting and winter grain planting. Temperatures across much of Turkey remained 2 to 6 degrees C below normal, with nighttime lows dropping well below freezing (-4 to -1 degrees C) across the Anatolia Plateau. Farther east, warm (2-6 degrees C above normal), dry weather in Iran favored cotton harvesting and winter grain planting.

SOUTH ASIA

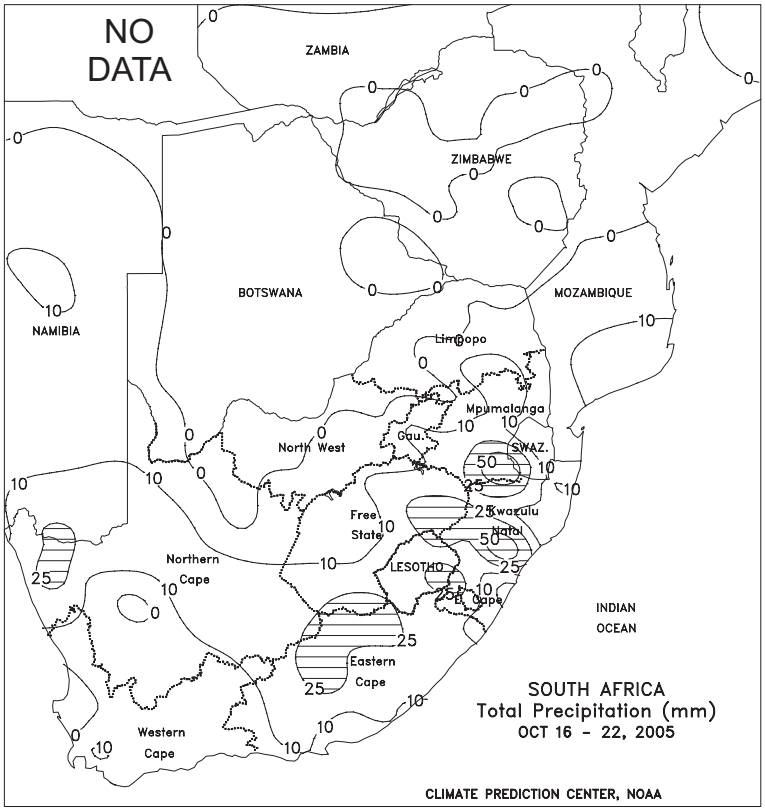
An unusually active late-season monsoon brought locally heavy rain to much of southern and northeastern India, while seasonally dry weather prevailed across northern growing areas. The monsoon typically has retreated southward into central Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh by mid-October. However, widespread monsoon showers (15-100 mm) prevailed across Maharashtra and southeastern Madhya Pradesh, slowing summer crop harvesting and potentially damaging open-boll cotton. In Orissa, heavy rain (60-240 mm) caused local flooding and rice harvest delays. Farther east, excessive rain (200-300 mm) in Bangladesh and northeastern India halted rice harvesting and caused widespread flooding and damage to infrastructure. In southern India, heavy showers (50-150 mm) maintained adequate to abundant moisture supplies for recently planted rabi (winter) crops, but likely caused fieldwork delays. In contrast, dry weather across northern India and much of Pakistan favored summer crop maturation and harvesting, although scattered showers (10-25 mm) in far northern Pakistan hampered earthquake recovery.





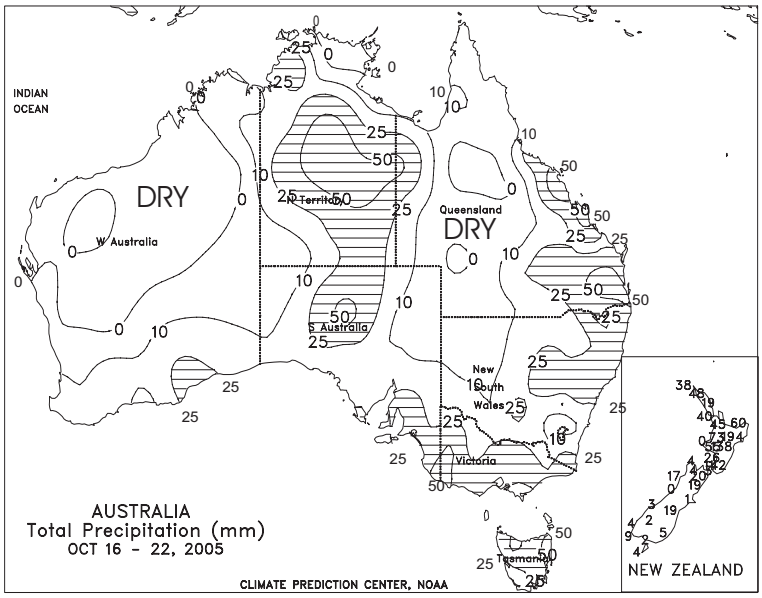
NORTHWESTERN AFRICA

Widespread showers signaled a favorable start to the rainy season. After last season's protracted dry spell, welcomed showers (10-50 mm) across Morocco boosted moisture supplies for winter grain planting and germination. Farther east, scattered light showers (less than 10 mm) in Algeria maintained adequate topsoil moisture following the previous week's widespread heavy rain (30-100 mm). Isolated light showers (2-10 mm) lingered across northern Tunisia, maintaining a 3-week spell of favorably wet weather for winter grain planting and establishment.



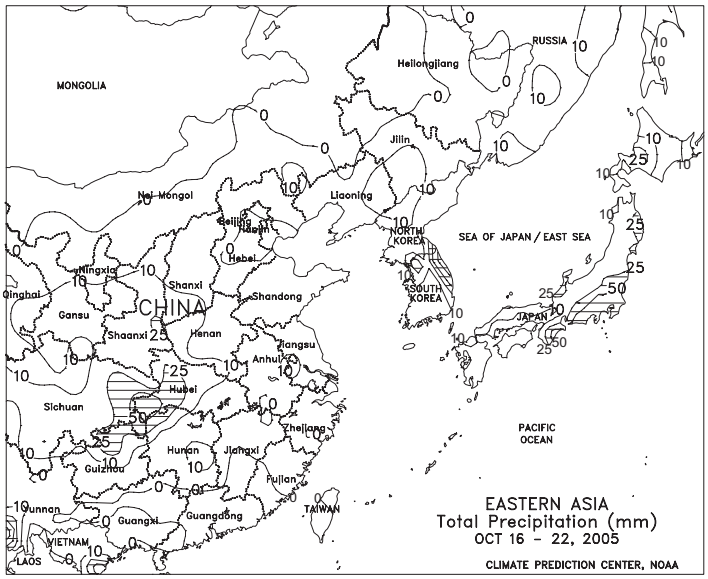
SOUTH AFRICA

Scattered showers (10-25 mm or more) covered southern and eastern sections of the corn belt (southern and eastern Free State and neighboring locations in Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal). The timely rainfall helped to condition fields for planting, and locally improved prospects for germination of corn and other summer crops. Mostly dry, seasonably warm weather continued in the more westerly corn areas (North West and central Free State), precluding early sowing but benefiting maturing winter wheat. Corn planting usually peaks during November but can last until early January. Elsewhere, showers (10-25 mm or more) were scattered throughout Northern and Eastern Cape, but mostly dry weather dominated Western Cape, aiding drydown and harvesting of winter wheat. Rainfall was also patchy and light in sugarcane areas of KwaZulu-Natal, limiting early growth.



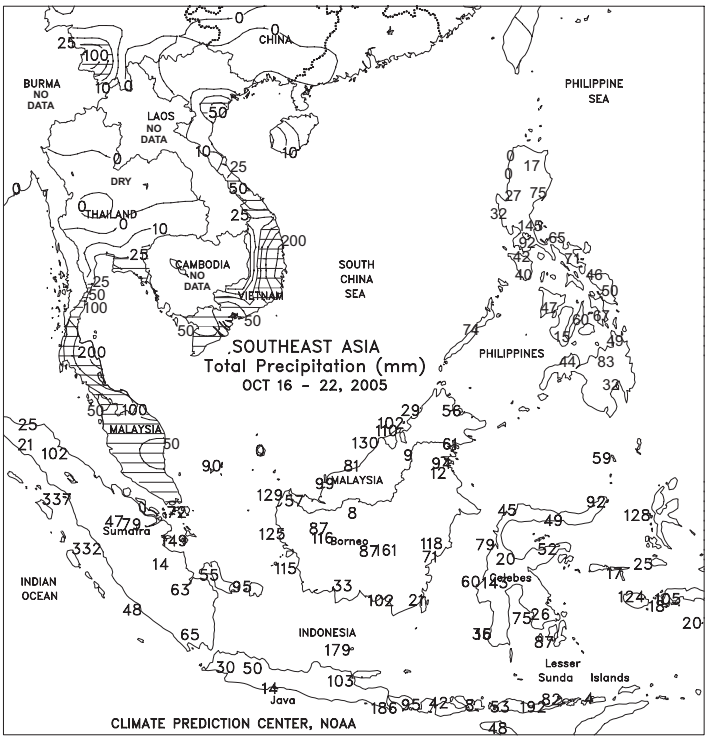
AUSTRALIA

Unseasonably cool (2 degrees C below normal), showery (4-16 mm, locally near 40 mm) weather in southern portions of Western Australia continued to favor filling winter wheat and barley. Farther east, widespread showers (10-30 mm) and warm (about 1 degree C above normal) weather maintained favorable yield prospects for filling winter grains in South Australia, Victoria, and southern New South Wales. In northern New South Wales and Queensland, widespread rain (generally 15-50 mm, locally more) hampered winter grain maturation and harvesting, but provided a welcomed boost in topsoil moisture for summer crops, which are typically planted in October and November. Temperatures in these latter two areas averaged about 1 degree C below normal.



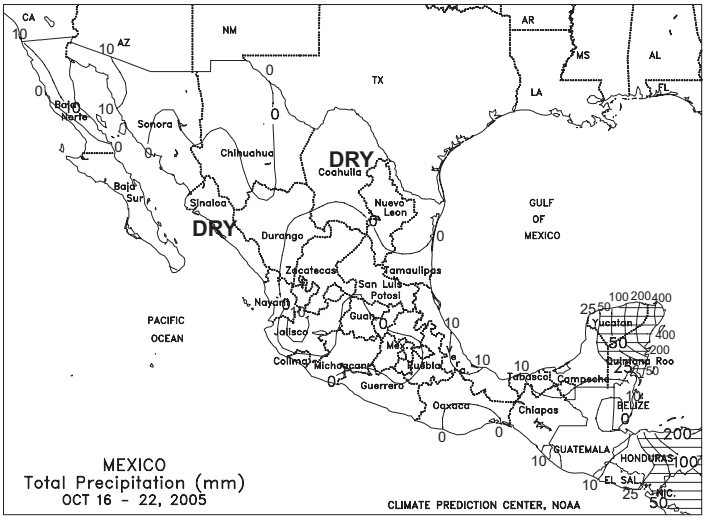
EASTERN ASIA

Mostly dry, seasonably warm weather continued to dominate key summer crop areas of eastern China, aiding drydown and harvesting of summer grains, oilseeds, and cotton. In addition, conditions were generally favorable for winter wheat planting on the North China Plain, with lows staying well above freezing in all but the northernmost crop areas. In contrast, light to moderate showers (10-25 mm or more) continued in west-central China (including the Sichuan Basin and upper Yangtze River Valley), maintaining moisture for germination of winter grains and oilseeds. Elsewhere, mostly dry weather prevailed on the Korean Peninsula and in Japan, with rain (10-25 mm or more) generally confined to central and northern Honshu.



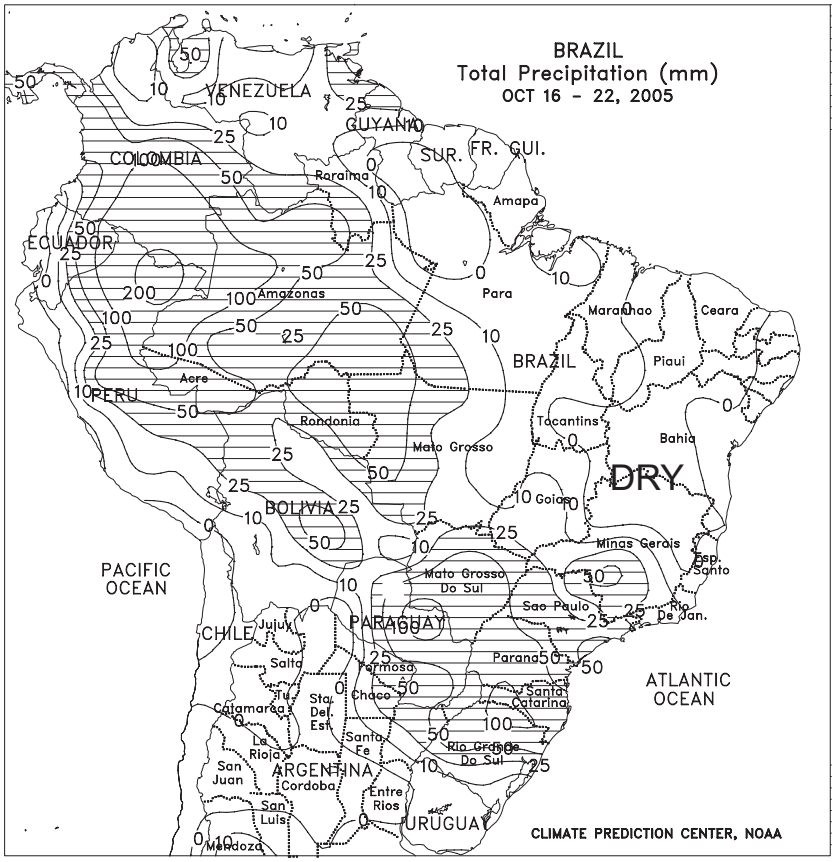
SOUTHEAST ASIA

The seasonal southward shift of monsoon showers continued across the region, while flooding persisted in central Vietnam. Mostly dry weather in interior Thailand and northern Vietnam aided maturing main-season rice and corn harvesting. Meanwhile, a slow-moving tropical disturbance triggered another round of heavy rain (200-300 mm) across coffee areas in central Vietnam, delaying early harvesting and damaging trees and infrastructure. In southern Vietnam, moderate showers (25-80 mm) slowed 10th month rice harvesting but maintained good moisture supplies for winter-spring rice. Isolated showers (25-50 mm) in south-central Thailand maintained favorable moisture supplies for newly planted second-crop rice. In the Philippines, widespread showers (25-70 mm) replaced last week's favorably dry weather, slowing wet-season rice harvesting. Elsewhere, heavy showers (20-100 mm locally more) throughout Sumatra and peninsular Malaysia maintained good moisture supplies for oil palm, while moderate to heavy rain (25-100 mm) spread southward into Java, Indonesia.



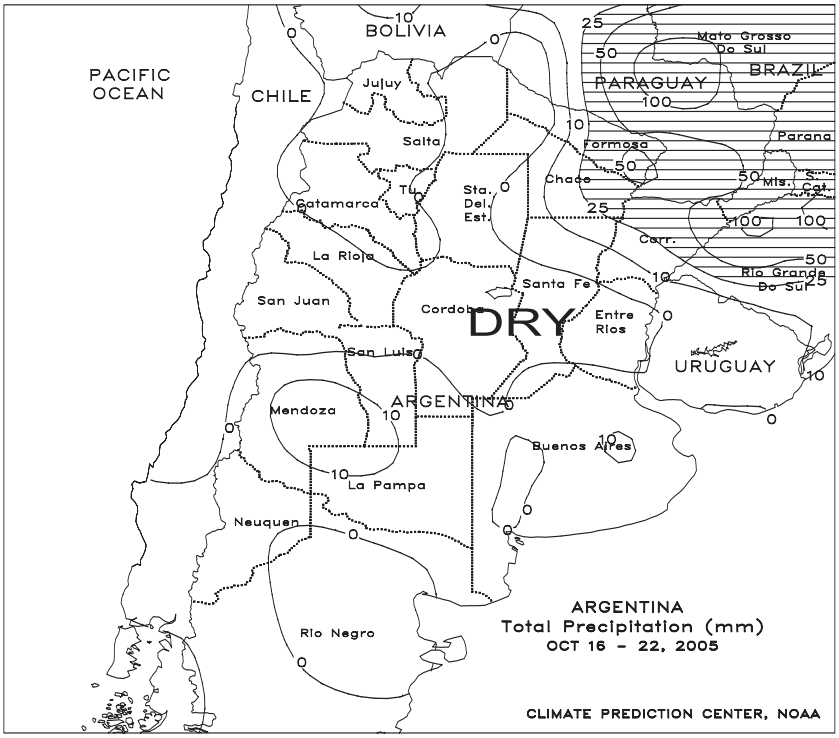
MEXICO

Category 4 Hurricane Wilma brought inundating rain (100-300 mm or more) and damaging winds (as high as 150 mph) to the Yucatan Peninsula. However, the most serious effects of the storm were confined to the minor agricultural states of Yucatan, Campeche, and Quintana Roo. Mostly dry weather prevailed elsewhere in the south, including recently flooded coffee and sugarcane areas of Veracruz, Chiapas, and Oaxaca. Warmth and dryness promoted drydown and harvesting of corn and other summer crops on the southern plateau, as well as in central and northern Mexico.



BRAZIL

Unseasonably heavy rain (50-100 mm or more) covered much of the winter wheat belt (notably Parana and Rio Grande do Sul), keeping unharvested crops unfavorably wet and sustaining concerns regarding crop damage and reductions in grain quality. Elsewhere in the center-south region, seasonable rainfall (exceeding 25 mm) maintained moisture reserves for citrus, coffee, and the upcoming soybean crop in Mato Grosso do Sul, Sao Paulo, and southern Minas Gerais. Warmer- and drier-than-normal weather (25 mm or less; temperatures averaging 2-4 degrees C above normal, with highs in the middle and upper 30s degrees C) reduced topsoil moisture available for soybean germination in Goias and southeastern Mato Grosso. In the northeast, warmth and dryness promoted fieldwork in coastal sugarcane and cocoa areas, but rain will be needed before planting of soybeans and other summer crops can become widespread.



ARGENTINA

Unseasonable warmth and dryness persisted across Cordoba and Santa Fe, where moisture was needed for normal development of reproductive to filling winter wheat. Temperatures in the middle 30s degrees C compounded stress on the wheat and emerging summer crops and caused additional delays in planting corn, sunflowers, and soybeans. According to Argentina's Agricultural Secretariat, corn and sunflowers were 55 and 44 percent planted, respectively, as of October 20. In both cases, planting was ahead of last year's pace, although fieldwork delays due to insufficient topsoil moisture were noted in the aforementioned dry locations. Elsewhere, light showers (less than 10 mm) kept topsoils moist across La Pampa and Buenos Aires, as summer warmth (highs in the lower and middle 30s degrees C) promoted development of vegetative to reproductive winter wheat. Summer crop planting has reportedly progressed well in the southern growing areas. Farther north, showers (10-25 mm or more) increased moisture for cotton establishment in eastern growing areas of Chaco and Formosa, but the remainder of the cotton belt stayed dry and warm.